



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SPECIAL COURTS GIVE VETERANS A SECOND CHANCE

It is often said that coming home from war can be more difficult than the war itself. While deployments are measured in months or years, reintegration, for many, is a lifelong event. The pressure can be too great for some veterans—and may lead to first time run-ins with the law.

That's why "Veterans Treatment Courts," tailored for veterans with first time felonies, have popped up all around the country. Judges offer leniency in exchange of a treatment plan, usually fulfilled at a VA facility.

The courts were highlighted in a recent segment on 60 Minutes, which traced the rise, fall, and rebirth of a Marine Veteran who found himself facing the justice system after a combat tour. The piece also delves into the story behind the bench, and how the treatment program is a tougher yet more promising option for veterans. The link to this segment is: <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=50133122n&tag=contentMain%3BcbsCarousel>. On the right hand side, scroll down and click on "Coming Home - Justice for Veterans."



The purpose of the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) program is to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved veterans have timely access to VHA services as clinically indicated. VJO Specialists are responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local justice system partners. VJO Specialist contacts in South Dakota are: Cathy King at the VABHHCS - Fort Meade and Rebecca Hess at SFVAHCS - Sioux Falls.

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Veterans Justice Outreach Initiative



SDNG EXPLORES PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITH TRIBES

Leaders from the South Dakota National Guard met with representatives from several Native American tribes in Oacoma Thursday, Oct. 11, to discuss partnership opportunities for community service projects on their reservations.

Representatives from the Yankton, Oglala, Rosebud, and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes listened to briefings on the role and capabilities of the Guard, and how they are able to support communities with engineer construction, material transportation and medical support services.

Both Guard leaders and tribal members saw the meeting as an opportunity to generate awareness of Guard services, what some of the needs are on the reservations, and how they can work together.

"We wanted to engage the tribes to enter into a partnership with the South Dakota National Guard," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "The partnership would involve the National Guard conducting training on the reservations that would result in improvements to the infrastructure, such as road development, construction services, providing medical care and other types of support that are consistent with the missions of the Guard."

"I appreciate General Reisch setting up this meeting with the different tribes to discuss some of the common goals we can achieve together," said Richard Leasure, environmental director and emergency manager for the Yankton Sioux Tribe.

Some of the potential projects discussed included medical screenings and examinations, veterinarian services, firewood transportation, and road construction and maintenance.

The National Guard provides community services through its Innovative Readiness Training program, or IRT. The IRT program partners with local organizations to provide a benefit to communities while providing hands-on, readiness-training opportunities for the Guard and other U.S. military units throughout the country. The program is built upon the long-standing tradition of the National Guard, acting as good neighbors at the local level in applying military personnel to assist worthy civic and community needs.

"The National Guard is a community-based organization," said Reisch. "We want to go out and continue to partner with our communities so we can continue to have membership from a broad range of communities, as well as provide services to them."

During the meeting, Guard leaders and tribal representatives also discussed enlistment opportunities and the benefits of joining the National Guard. "We want to enhance the diversity of the Guard and increase the number of Native Americans that we have serving in our organization," said Reisch. "Native Americans make excellent service members. One part of this partnership we seek to develop is to increase recruitment from the reservations."



GUARD PARTNERSHIP (CONTINUED)

Since its inception during the President Clinton Administration, the IRT program has been active in South Dakota. During that time, the SDNG has participated in numerous community based projects ranging from construction and repair of Little League baseball field kiosks to road maintenance and land reclamation in Custer State Park. Over the years, the National Guard has provided some public service projects for Native American communities to include delivering firewood and Indian Health Services missions to the Pine Ridge, Crow Creek, Rosebud and Lower Brule reservations.

The program also focuses on providing service member training within their military occupational skill set, which includes carpentry, masonry, plumbing, electrical, engineering, transportation, and all aspects of medical care. "The partnership is a benefit to our organization because it allows our Soldiers and Airmen perfect their skills and to do their missions in a new environment, which allows us to get better at our jobs while simultaneously providing a product to the Native American tribes," said Reisch.

"My vision with the tribes across the state is to replicate what we've done in the Black Hills during the Golden Coyote exercise for the past 28 years," said Reisch. "Every year, Black Hills National Forest and Custer State Park officials know they are going to get a lot of support and work completed with the assistance of the Guard. I want to do the same thing with the reservations. "The South Dakota National Guard has gone around the world for the last 150 years making life better for other countries," said Reisch. "We have nine sovereign nations within our state borders, and I think we need to help these nations that we have right here at home."

"I saw a true spirit of cooperation in the Guard – wanting to work with the tribal communities, especially after this meeting," said Salomon. "I have hopes this partnership will build into something positive for our tribes. We are one nation, and we live in this nation together. We are collaborating together to build our nation into a country we can be proud to be from."



BOEVE NAMED EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Regina Boeve, Claims Examiner for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Office in Sioux Falls, has been selected as "employee of the month."

Regina was recognized for her "team player" approach within the office. "She is always willing to assist employees with their workload and does so without being asked," said David Wells.



TEAM

Together Everyone
Accomplishes More

VSO MINI CONFERENCES

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will hold their fall VSO Mini-Conferences November 14-16, 2012, at the following locations:

Nov. 14 — Sturgis - Veterans Club, 868 Main Street

Nov. 15 — Pierre - American Legion, 520 S. Pierre Street

Nov. 16 — Brookings – City/County Building, 520 3rd Street

With EVR season just around the corner, the primary focus of this training will be on veterans and widows pension. Other pertinent topics will be presented.

As in the past, the training sessions are scheduled to run from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Questions regarding the Fall Mini Conferences should be directed to Larry Person, South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (605-773-4982).



SD ARMY GUARD HAS NEW ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL

Brigadier General Craig D. Johnson is the new assistant adjutant general for the South Dakota Army National Guard. A Transfer of Authority ceremony took place between Johnson and the outgoing assistant adjutant general, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey P. Marlette, at the Joint Force Headquarters on Camp Rapid in Rapid City Oct. 13.

As the assistant adjutant general, Johnson is responsible to the South Dakota National Guard's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, for strategic planning, strength management, troop readiness and mobilization support of the state's nearly 3,300 Army National Guard Soldiers.

Johnson, of Rapid City, replaces Marlette, who served in the position since April of 2011. Marlette, of New Underwood, will retire from the Guard after 32 years of service to the state and nation.

"I want to thank Brig. Gen. Marlette for his exemplary service and the great job he did serving as the assistant adjutant general. He is truly an outstanding leader, tremendous manager and fearless advisor," said Reisch, during the ceremony. "I have great trust and confidence in our new assistant adjutant general, and I wish Gen. Johnson the very best in this new position."

During the ceremony, Johnson was promoted from the rank of colonel to brigadier general. "Serving one's country is a noble calling, and I believe among life's greatest work. Therefore, this promotion is a new beginning; a rebirth of my commitment to work and serve my country with a renewed spirit," said Johnson. "I look forward to the responsibility of my continued service in this great organization."

Johnson began his military service by enlisting in his hometown Guard unit in Platte in 1976. He received his commission through the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga., in 1977. Johnson's command assignments include serving as the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th Engineer Battalion, 8th Infantry Division in Dexhiem, Germany, and as the battalion commander of the 109th Engineer Battalion. Johnson is a combat veteran, having led the 109th in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from January – August 2003.

Johnson began his full-time career with the South Dakota Army National Guard as the training technician for the 137th Engineer Battalion, where he also served as the administrative officer. He then went on to serve as the state equal employment manager and an administrative officer for the 109th Engineer Group. Upon his return from Operation Iraqi Freedom, Johnson was assigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Information Management. He later attended the United States Army War College, and upon his return, was reassigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Information Management. Johnson was then appointed as the United States Property and Fiscal Officer for South Dakota in March 2008, where he served until Sept. 30, 2012.



Brig. Gen. Craig D. Johnson, left, receives the Army guidon from Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard

FLU VACCINATIONS

To safeguard the health of America's veterans, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) urges all veterans to receive flu vaccinations this season.

Walk-in immunization clinics for veterans enrolled in VA's health care system will take place at the following locations and times. Note that shingles and Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough) vaccinations will be available.

Aberdeen VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) - 2301 8th Ave NE, Suite 225

October 24, 2012, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

October 31, 2012, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Sioux Falls VA Medical Center - 2501 W. 22nd Street

October 22, 2012, 7:00 AM-4:00 PM

October 31, 2012, 11:00 AM-5:00 PM

November 5, 7:30 AM-5:30 PM

November 9, 7:30 AM-5:30 PM

November 26, 7:30 AM-5:30 PM

Spirit Lake, Iowa CBOC - 1310 Lake St.

October 18, 2012, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM

October 30, 2012, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM

Wagner CBOC - 400 West Hwy 46

October 19, 2012, 12:30-4:30 PM

October 26, 2012, 12:30-4:30 PM

Watertown CBOC - 917 29th St. SE

October 22, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

October 23, 2012, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

November 1, 2012, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM



EXPANDED DIALYSIS UNIT OPENS

Patients in western South Dakota in need of dialysis treatment now have access to improved quality of care, thanks to the seven-station, upgraded dialysis unit at the VA Black Hills Health Care System (VABHHCS) Hot Springs Medical Center.

On September 17, the expanded and newly remodeled VA BHHCS dialysis unit started treatments. The expansion included several patient amenities, including lockers for patients to keep personal comfort items while on dialysis. Each station has individual reading lamps and a heating panel above it, so the patients can adjust temperature settings to their liking.

Dialysis units in western South Dakota have been at, or near, capacity in recent years. This has made patient placement difficult and also presented difficulties for dialysis patients traveling to the Black Hills.

This recent expansion and remodel will increase the dialysis unit capacity from 20 patients to 28. In 2001, the unit did approximately 2,400 treatments per year. It now averages approximately 2,800 and is expected to continue increased treatments per year.

UPDATE ON NEW STATE VETERANS HOME

Earlier this year we shared with you, the news that South Dakota would be receiving a VA grant to fund 65% of the costs of a new veterans home in western South Dakota.

Environmental and engineering assessments are completed and the Department is hoping to go to bids by February of 2013 and groundbreaking by early Spring.

This new LEED certified facility will accommodate 100 residents and will be expandable to accommodate 125.

This state-of-the-art veterans home will sit on the existing Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home campus overlooking downtown Hot Springs. The design concept features a neighborhood-based residential living arrangement—a small village promoting social interaction and a sense of community. The neighborhoods will be connected by a towncenter with shops, therapy rooms, chapel, etc.



COUNTERDRUG CIVIL OPERATIONS TEAM AWARDED FOR EXCELLENCE

The South Dakota National Guard Counterdrug Program's Civil Operations Team was awarded the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award at the Pentagon Hall of Hero's in Washington, D.C. Thursday, Oct. 18.

The award recognizes the best Drug Demand Reduction program in each military service for its effort in promoting its support of outreach and prevention programs within its communities.

South Dakota's Civil Operations Team set the tone for the year during Red Ribbon Week, where they had approximately 15,000 students sign a red ribbon pledging to live their lives drug free.

The SDNG Counterdrug program started in 1996, as a one soldier operation, with the mission of teaching the negative effects of bad choices and decisions, tobacco use, alcohol use, marijuana use and meth use.



Accepting on behalf of the SDNG Counterdrug program was Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Reisch, SDNG adjutant general (second from left), Master Sgt. Kristi Palmer, South Dakota Civil Operations noncommissioned officer in charge (center) and Maj. Robert Dejong, South Dakota Counterdrug coordinator (third from right). Also pictured left to right, Dr. Laura J. Junor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Readiness, Maj. Gen. (Ret) Arthur T. Dean, Chairman and CEO Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and Joseph J. Angello, Jr., Director Operational Readiness and Safety, presented the award. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Betty J. Squatrito-Martin, National Guard Bureau Counterdrug, Public Affairs)

Upcoming Events

Oct. 19—SFVAHCS Women Veterans Conference—Sioux Falls Holiday Inn City Centre (100 W. 8th Street) - 8:00 am—2:45 pm
 Oct. 19—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Wagner CBOC (400 W. Hwy 46) —12:30 pm—4:30 pm
 Oct. 22—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Watertown CBOC (917 29th St SE) —9:00 am—4:00 pm
 Oct. 22—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:00 am—4:00 pm
 Oct. 23—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Watertown CBOC (917 29th St SE) —9:00 am—4:00 pm
 Oct. 23—SD Veterans Council Meeting—DAV—Sioux Falls—10:30 am
 Oct. 24—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Aberdeen CBOC (2301 8th Ave NE—Suite 225) 9:00 am—3:00 pm
 Oct. 26—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Wagner CBOC (400 W. Hwy 46) —12:30 pm—4:30 pm
 Oct. 31—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Aberdeen CBOC (2301 8th Ave NE—Suite 225) 9:00 am—3:00 pm
 Oct. 31—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —11:00 am—5:00 pm
 Nov. 1—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—Watertown CBOC (917 29th St SE) —9:00 am—4:00 pm
 Nov. 3-4—DOD Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Reintegration Event for the 842nd, 451st Fire Fighters and DET 48—Spearfish High School
 Nov. 5—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:30 am—5:30 pm
 Nov. 9—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:30 am—5:30 pm
 Nov. 11—Veterans Day
 Nov. 12—Veterans Day Regional Site Program—Riggs High School Theatre—Pierre—10:45 am
 Nov. 14 —SDDVA Mini Conference—Sturgis - Veterans Club, 868 Main Street
 Nov. 15 —SDDVA Mini Conference—Pierre - American Legion, 520 S. Pierre Street
 Nov. 16 —SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings – City/County Building, 520 3rd Street
 Nov. 26—SFVAHCS Flu Shot Clinic—SF VA Medical Center (2501 W. 22nd St) —7:30 am—5:30 pm
 Dec. 8—Wreaths Across America

UPCOMING EVENTS

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